

To: Jesse Paul[jpaul@denverpost.com]
Cc: Grantham, Nancy[Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov]
From: Gray, David
Sent: Mon 8/24/2015 5:32:17 PM
Subject: RE: Responses

EPA has worked successfully to address environmental concerns at hundreds of abandoned mine sites across the West. EPA will thoroughly investigate this incident, and it is committed to applying all lessons learned to its work as it moves forward.

While EPA continues to investigate the root causes of the release of mining waste at the Gold King Mine, all EPA regional offices will immediately cease any field investigation work at mines, including tailings facilities. EPA is in the process of initiating an independent assessment by a sister federal agency or another external entity to examine the factors that led to the Gold King Mine incident. Based on the outcome from that assessment, EPA will determine what actions may be necessary to avoid similar incidents at other sites.

While EPA stops work on existing field investigations and assessments at these mining sites, EPA also is instructing its regional offices to identify existing sites with similarities to the Gold King Mine site, to identify any potential immediate threats and to consider appropriate response actions.

From: Jesse Paul [mailto:jpaul@denverpost.com]
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2015 11:16 AM
To: Gray, David
Cc: Grantham, Nancy
Subject: Re: Responses

David and Nancy,

Good morning.

I am hoping for a little clarification on my weekend question about other mines at risk for blowout in Colorado. Does this mean there are not other mines documented as being at risk in Colorado? Are you reviewing other files to try and document other mines that are at risk? How has this process, if it is happening, being undertaken in light of the Gold King spill?

Thanks,

On Sat, Aug 22, 2015 at 2:07 PM, Gray, David <gray.david@epa.gov> wrote:

Hi Jesse,

Nancy and I pulled together these responses to your questions. I hope they are helpful.

Can you explain the timing of the document release? We have been seeking these documents for weeks. Why are they just becoming available now?

EPA has been compiling the documents and consulting with contractors regarding confidential business information, conducting quality assurance and legal reviews, and loading the documents into our document management system for public release.

Why was work being done on Aug. 5 when these documents show it wasn't officially slated to begin until Aug. 17?

Work began at the site based on the availability of personnel and equipment, and appropriate weather conditions. The activities were consistent with the activities outlined in the schedule.

Why are the cost estimated for work at the Gold King redacted?

EPA contractors are entitled to make claims of confidential business information, or CBI, before their EPA documents become public records. Redactions to this document were claimed CBI by the contractor.

Does the EPA have other documentation showing blow-out risk at other mines in Colorado?

This request will require extensive file review by the agency and cannot be answered today. However, we do not know of documentation showing blow-out risk at other mines in Colorado that can be shared with you immediately.

Also - we wanted to let you know that the Task Order Statement of Work dated 6/25/14 that you mentioned in your article stated that EPA was advised by Environmental Restoration is incorrect. This is a task order generated by EPA to our contractor requesting them to create a work plan to complete the activities outlined by the agency.

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Jesse Paul

Breaking News Reporter, The Denver Post

Desk: 303-954-1733

Cell: 302-528-7118

@JesseAPaul